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S E C R E T KYIV 002414 SIPDIS DEPT FOR EUR/UMB EEB/ESC/IEC FOR SGALLOGLY AND LWRIGHT DOE FOR LEKIMOFF, CCALIENDO, RBOUDREAU USDOC FOR 4231/ITP
11. (S) Summary and Comment: Controversial Ukrainian oligarch Dmytro Firtash, best known as co-owner of gas intermediary RosUkrEnergo (RUE), ca
Firtash Seeks to Improve His Image -----
12. (C) Ukrainian billionaire Dmytro Firtash, best known as co-owner of controversial gas intermediary RUE, sought a meeting with the Ambassad
Firtash's Support for President Yushchenko... -----
13. (C) In the meeting, which lasted two and a half hours, Firtash told the Ambassador that he was not a public person, but had recently been p
...And Contempt for Tymoshenko -----
14. (C) Firtash defined Tymoshenko as an accomplished oligarch who had made deals with Moscow that would leave Ukraine vulnerable to Russian ol
15. (C) Firtash stated that he felt Russia was strongly supporting a BYuT and PoR coalition and that such a coalition was about to be finalizec
16. (C) Firtash said he and Akhmetov both wanted a coalition between the President's supporters and the PoR. He claimed that he had brokered a
From Humble Beginnings... -----
17. (C) Firtash described himself as a simple person who grew up in the village of Synkiv in the Ternopil oblast in Western Ukraine. Firtash ex
18. (C) Firtash told the Ambassador he attended an occupational institute before he was drafted into the army in 1986 and studied to become a fire
19. (C) (Note: The Ukrainian newspaper "Ukrainska Pravda" researched Firtash's life and reported that Firtash was not highly educated, but was
...To Powerful Oligarch -----
110. (C) Firtash gave a detailed account of how he got into the gas business. Firtash explained that his food and commodities business, which h
111. (S) Firtash also described the gas business in Ukraine during the mid 1990s as particularly dangerous. Firtash said that then Prime Minist
112. (C) Another such businessman was Igor Makarov, who founded the Itera gas trading company in 1992, which provided Turkmen gas to former Sov
113. (C) According to Firtash, he hired Hungarian-born businessman Andras Knopp to negotiate new gas trading deals with Kazakhstan, Turkmenists
114. (S) Firtash also recounted that Makarov invited him to dinner in Kyiv in January 2002, shortly after Firtash had signed the gas deals with
115. (C) According to Firtash, by 2002, ETG was the sole transporter of Turkmen gas to Ukraine. (Note: According to media reports, by 2005 Firt
The Future of RosUkrEnergo (RUE) -----
116. (C) When asked about Tymoshenko's promise to rid Ukraine of RUE, Firtash responded by making a link between Tymoshenko and Russia. He argu
117. (C) Responding to the Ambassador's question, Firtash said Ukraine's current gas debt to RUE was near \$3 billion, adding that the debt was
Ties to Russian Organized Crime -----
118. (S) The Ambassador asked Firtash to address his alleged ties to Russian organized crime bosses like Semyon Mogilievich. Firtash answered t
119. (S) Firtash's bottom line was that he did not deny having links to those associated with organized crime. Instead, he argued that he was f